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NEWS & VIEWS

Vetoing Nixon

If Richard Nixon manages to save his Presidential scalp in spite of Watergate, it may be the most that he does save. It is doubtful, for instance, that he will ever be able to recoup sufficient Presidential authority to govern influentially. His legislative programs most particularly are in for a rocky time in a quietly incensed and newly assertive Congress.

One possibility as a result of this is a number of Presidential vetoes, as Nixon seeks to countermand new legislation or legislation which, because of reshaping or the tacking on of amendments, cuts against the grain of proposals he sends up the Hill.

Nixon already has issued 31 vetoes, more than either of his two predecessors. (President Johnson handed down 30 vetoes; President Kennedy, 25.) Inevitably that 31 figure will swell, but Nixon has a considerable way to go before he sets any records.

Franklin Roosevelt was responsible for a total of 631 vetoes; Harry Truman for 250; Dwight Eisenhower for 201. (Andrew Johnson, in the event you're interested, issued 21 direct vetoes and had seven pocket vetoes. Fifteen were overridden, the greatest number in history.)

The detail that sets apart the Nixon vetoes is not their number (at least not at present), but their character: the majority by far have been directed against what would fall in the category of strictly humanitarian legislation.

Examples: the veto of June 22, 1970, of a measure providing for hospital loans; veto of the Federal Employee Hazard Occupation Act, Jan. 4, 1971; veto of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act, Oct. 27, 1972; ditto, March 27, 1973; veto of a bill establishing a National Institute on Aging, Oct. 30, 1972.

Some 24 of Nixon's 31 vetoes have come on benevolent measures such as these.

Of course, these vetoes were issued in the days of Nixon's high imperialism—days which, in the wake of Watergate, are very likely gone forever. For even if he should survive Watergate, it is impossible to conceive of a Nixon as impervious as before to the welfare and aspirations of the "little" people who would have benefited from acts like the expansion of veterans' health care (vetoed Oct. 27, 1972) and the extension of unemployment training opportunities (vetoed Dec. 16, 1970).

It is much more likely that in a bid for public sympathy and support, a chastened Nixon will allow measures such as these to become law, however much they might inwardly offend his selective San Clemente-Key Biscayne instincts. If this is the one good to come out of Watergate, it is a good not to be minimized.

Hearings Overcovered?

Commentator Elizabeth Drew, over Washington's all-news radio station, WTOP:

"If you watch the Ervin hearings on television, you may wonder who most of those people are who are sitting in the audience. They are members of the press. You may wonder what so many members of the press are doing sitting there. So do I.

"The maldistribution of press-power in Washington has always been one of the more baffling insanities. Why does every news organization have to have its own person at events such as these? The same question applies to many press conferences and other ceremonial occasions. Some reporters will pick up nuances that others do not. Some will bring great descriptive powers to the way a certain witness scratches his ear. But not that many. I would empty the Senate caucus room of all but about 25 reporters, and send the rest out to look into other things.

"Such as: What else did the White House secret policemen, John Caulfield and Anthony Ulasewicz, do? What else did the White House plumbers do? What government favors were done in exchange for campaign contributions? We know very little about this. There are quite a number of agencies around town in a position to dish out what is referred to here as 'the boodle.' They are all worth a visit and a little inquiry.

"There are a lot of other questions. Many intriguing threads are still dangling. When reporters are asked some of these questions, they say they are too busy—but too many of them are too busy doing the same thing."

"I forgive you, Richard."

The State of Marriage

The new generation's extensive indifference for the institution of marriage is apparently no mere European and American phenomenon. Father Adrian Hastings, British journalist specializing in African affairs, reports something similar occurring there.

According to Hastings, "simple ceremonies" or "temporary relationships" are gaining in popularity, and Christian churches must face up to the "declining importance" of church marriages in Africa.

Hastings studied Africa's evolving marriage situation on commission of the Anglican Archbishops of Capetown, Central Africa, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda.

Factors in new attitudes toward marriage, said Hastings, are social unrest, fast-changing mores, and the fact that, more and more, priests and Communion are becoming peripheral to Christian life for many Africans.

Odds and Ends

—*Stern* magazine reports on a macabre item being offered by a toy manufacturer for 175 marks: "a genuine model of a concentration camp *mit* North-South watchtowers."

—David Brinkley's NBC report on the razing of Covent Garden included the wondrous revelation that Ellen Terry was the mistress of Charles II. Ellen Terry lived from 1848-1928; Charles II died in 1685. As a friend remarked, theirs must have been an unusually platonic relationship. JOHN DEEDY

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CORRESPONDENCE

The POW Issue

New York, N.Y.

To the Editors: Despite her well-known antipathy to the Vietnam war, *New York Post* columnist Harriet Van Horne did not shrink from recognizing the "terrible truth" when she heard it from the lips of the POWs. "Leg irons, beatings, rope torture, foul food, solitary confinement, a heartless lack of medical attention . . . these were the details, and every word had the ring of terrible truth." (March 30, 1973).

Why is the personal testimony of these men never mentioned directly in the articles by Bernard Sklar and Peter J. Ognibene [June 1]? However the POW issue has been used by Nixon, these men are either testifying to what happened to them or they are "liars and hypocrites" as charged by Miss Fonda who is naturally shocked to discover that helpless prisoners were tortured to make them take part in her visits to Hanoi.

Surely, *Commonweal* will not join President Nixon who failed to mention these tortures in his March 29 speech because to do so would be to undermine the major thrust of his Administration—detente and "reconstruction" for Hanoi. Is the truth to be sacrificed because it is momentarily inconvenient?

When Attica recently exploded in revolt and a massacre took place, the McKay Commission was set up and was quite successful in recently reporting the facts to all of us. Professor

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Summer Schedule

In keeping with the usual practice, *Commonweal* is again appearing on alternate weeks during the summer months. Forthcoming issues will be dated September 7 and September 21. From then on we will resume our normal weekly schedule.

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IRONIES AND VALUES

It was a week for ironies. . . .

The President of the United States, still in rout before the revelations of Watergate, was between hiding places—San Clemente, Camp David, Key Biscayne—, reportedly preparing the latest definitive statement of his "innocence." The Vice President was on notice from Maryland law authorities that he was under investigation for possible bribery, extortion, tax fraud and conspiracy. In New York, former Attorney General John N. Mitchell awaited trial for influence-peddling and perjury, while back in Washington, dozens of once high and trusted White House aides—liars, equivocators, obstructors of justice, suborners of jury, etc—were just short of a variety of criminal charges being lodged against them. But no one was in jail except those caught red-handed in Watergate.

Not that any of them should have been, at least not before their day in court. But then neither should Dorothy Day have been in jail in Fresno, California—and that's one irony. Dorothy Day was in jail because, as one columnist put it, for 76 years she has lived a life worth living and always stood with the victims of this earth. More exactly, she was in jail because with 400 other witnesses for justice she chose to ignore an order not to picket closer than 100-feet apart (which, in effect, is not to picket at all) and no closer than 15 feet to the vineyards which would shut out Cesar Chavez' United Farm Workers union for, of all groups, the Teamsters.

There is no precise relation, of course, between the swift application of law in Frenso and the torturing of law in Washington, between the jailing of Dorothy Day and the painstaking investigation of the slippery men of the Nixon Administration. It is perhaps even tendentious to gather them into a joined frame of reference. The ironies, however, are too strong to resist —the irony of who was behind bars, and also the irony of public response. The jailing of Dorothy Day elicited minimum reaction from media and from people. On the other hand, the Senate Watergate hearings were being recessed—out of Committee-member weariness to be sure, but also, if one is allowed an impression based on media surveys, because of a feeling that the hearings were edging towards counterproductivity among certain segments of the public. Culprits were taking on the gloss of martyrs,

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as the Ervin Committee groped for elusive missing links.

The analogies of these developments may not be faultless. Nevertheless, there is a point for reflection when the public can shrug off the jailing of a person like Dorothy Day, while at the same time it is generously patient with conspirators and cover-up artists, and begins to grow impatient wth those who would pursue illegalities to their embarrassing sources. The ironies tell us something about our values.

But ironies abound these days. Take also the Supreme Court's overriding of Justice Douglas' Aug. 4 ordering of a halt to U.S. bombing of Cambodia. There was precedent for Douglas' ruling. In 1952, the Supreme Court refused to sanction President Truman's seizure of the steel industry on grounds that the President's power "must stem either from an act of Congress or from the Constitution itself." If property is that sacred, argued Douglas, how much more so human life. But not one other justice so agreed. The bombers droned toward their Aug. 15 deadline. . . . Ostensibly American property and foreign life are in different value categories.

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Latin America: Toward A New Coexistence

The Organization of American States insists on keeping the "shark along with the sardines," explained the Cuban Ambassador to Peru in restating his country's opposition to joining any hemispheric group containing the U.S. Instead, Cuba proposes a union of Latin-American states which can develop enough political and economic power to counteract U.S. domination of the region.

Interest in the Cuban position was stimulated in Peru recently (June-July) when the capital of Lima hosted a special OAS subcommission charged with recommending changes in the organization.

There is a growing interest, still a minority, among the Latin-American nations to reintegrate Cuba, despite U.S. firm opposition. Several nations have unilaterally restored diplomatic ties although OAS sanctions remain. The latest to do so was Argentina, which has taken a strong anti-imperialist and nationalistic stance since the return of Juan Domingo Perón to power. Argentina joined Peru, Chile and Mexico (which never severed relations) in recognizing the Castro government.

Friendly overtures are also being made by Venezuela, claiming that cordial relations exist even though official ties are lacking. The Venezuelan position is historically interesting because its claim of Cuban interference in Venezuelan domestic affairs through the training of guerrillas helped lead to OAS ostracism.

These relaxed attitudes were reflected in the Lima meeting. Venezuela hoped that a majority would soon favor Cuban reentrance into the OAS. Chile and Peru argued for the acceptance of ideological pluralism among member nations—a pointed criticism of the 1962 OAS declaration condemning Marxism-Leninism as incompatable with the Inter-American system. However, no one asked that the shark be expelled.

The emphasis was on restructuring the organization to lessen U.S. hegemony. Thus, the strong restatement of the Cuban position served as notice that Cuban reentrance into the OAS is really a moot issue. It only serves as a yardstick to judge how radical the members want to sound publicly in criticizing the U.S. All fall short of the Cuban position that cooperation with U.S.-inspired hemispheric entities is only an aid to imperialist penetration.

Cuban Ambassador to Peru Antonio Núñez Jiménez strongly criticized U.S. use of the OAS to mask overt aggression. Speaking to a group of Peruvian diplomats, he cited the economic blockade of his country and the 1965 invasion of the Dominican Republic.

"We believe that the shark should stay in his fish tank and the sardines in theirs," he said arguing for a Latin-American union. Right now such a union is a pipe dream. The other Latin countries are equally worried about the same general issues as Cuba is, but they are still heavily dependent on the U.S. Latins fear that if they throw out the shark, he will take all the water with him.

One Peruvian delegate explained why: A majority of the loans to Latin America come from U.S. governmental and private sources. Foreign companies, mainly U.S., control 40 percent of Latin America's gross national product. A majority of Latin-American exports go to the U.S., yet U.S. companies control 75 percent of the goods and products exported to the U.S. In contrast, Latin-American companies control none of the exports sent by the U.S. to Latin America.

A less dependent coexistence with the shark seems to be the Latin-American goal. The Latin consensus was for a major restructuring of the OAS, which would give the sardines a greater role.

Among the recommendations were: The Inter-American Reciprocal Assistance Treaty which ties hemispheric security to U.S. power needs to be changed. Mechanisms are needed to protect the Latin nations from economic aggression and the subordination of economic cooperation to political issues.

The final document of the Lima meeting also recommended that the Inter-American Development Bank amplify its credit policies to take into consideration "international social justice" rather than relying on technical criteria. This is an attack on the IDB support for brick-and-mortar projects rather than programs aimed at transforming social structures favorable to pro- U.S. ruling oligarchies and foreign investors.

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U.S. reaction to Latin discontent was less than favorable. The emphasis was on reformism which goes little beyond changes in parliamentary procedures rather than a realignment of power within the hemisphere. Ideological pluralism was questioned, with the stress on representative democracy as the ideal, a direct rejection of the speeches favoring Cuba.

The U.S. tone was set by Jack Kubisch, Undersecretary of State for Latin-American Affairs. He admitted that the U.S. had committed errors, but said that hemispheric domination has not been the U.S. goal. With the Lima press full of Watergate stories, he asked the Latin delegates to have confidence in President Nixon's desire to establish mature relations.

Pragmatism became the order of the day for the U.S. delegation as it was reminded of the need to conform to contemporary realities. Reading between the lines this means *de facto* U.S. control and a stubborn desire to retain it.

Over the years, the OAS has moved from being a rubber stamp for U.S. hemispheric policies into a sounding board for Latin complaints. The U.S. still controls enough votes to get key decisions passed in the general assembly. It also has virtual veto power over many IDB loans through its huge contributions and the weighted voting system. But the use of the OAS as a critical platform is a chink in the armor. This, plus the growing Latin-American nationalism, means that pragmatism from the U.S. viewpoint involves a willingness to readjust to new attitudes if it is to retain domination over the hemisphere. The current Inter-American system was developed over 25 years ago during the post-World War II cold war era.

The degree to which the sardines unite will determine whether any OAS changes are real or superficial. And in this task the Latins have a long way to go. The radical positions is a minority comprising no more than five or six countries. The remainder can be expected to follow the U.S. when the chips are down.

The Lima meeting was the first of three to determine an agenda for change to be acted upon next year by the general assembly. The remaining two meetings are scheduled for Washington (this month) and Lima (November).

Meanwhile, Cuba plans to shun any overtures to reenter the OAS and plans to continue its policy of trying to bilaterally reinitiate relations with the other Latin-American countries. The strategy was outlined by Fidel Castro: "We hope that one by one (the Latin-American nations) break with the past, one by one develop their revolutions. And to the extent that revolutionary, truly revolutionary, states emerge, to that extent will emerge between them and us natural and indispensable ties."

AGOSTINO BONO

(Agostino Bono writes frequently on Latin American affairs for U.S. publications.)

Ireland: Politics, Not Miracles

As the 78 newly elected members to the Northern Ireland Assembly come together to work out how the principle of power-sharing among the parties should be reflected in the composition of the Executive, the main question still looms large: can the British Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Mr. William Whitelaw, do for the people of the North what Moses did for the Israelites by taking them out of their bondage and establishing the promised land?

Yet the election results can clearly be seen as a rejection by the populace of violence and the acceptance of the British Government's White Paper and the Assembly. The gunmen do not represent the people. This alone vindicates Mr. Whitelaw's attempt to bring democratic politics into the fabric of Northern Ireland society.

This should not be overlooked despite the indecisive composition of the Assembly: official Unionists, 22 seats; anti-White Paper Unionists, 11; the Loyalist Coalition, 16; Social Democratic and Labor Party, 19; Alliance, 8; Northern Ireland Independent Labor Party, 1. Some commentators, taking the role of prophets of doom, wrote off the results as signifying "no change for Ulster." This view, to the dismay of the British Government, tended to take root in Britain. It was generally accepted that sectarianism still determined the voting pattern and that there was no scope for a moderate non-sectarian party to emerge in the North.

To some extent this view was correct, but it suffers from the dual sin of optimism and pessimism. Optimism, in the sense that it was expecting a miracle that would overnight wipe out 400 years of socio-religious differences. The election was about a New Assembly, not a New Covenant; it was about politics, not miracles. It was too pessimistic a view in that the commentators failed to grasp that moderation in the context of Northern Ireland does not mean the disappearance of differences. As the *Irish Times* noted: "Moderation in the North should surely be to recognize the basic conflict and to try to work out a solution that is fair to both sides, i.e., neither to want to rush Unionists into an emergence of the SDIP as a powerful political force, condemn those with national aspirations to be locked up indefinitely in an embrace with the British Crown."

Whatever the uneasy balance of power in the Assembly, it should not be forgotten that this election was heralded as the most crucial election in the fifty years' history of the State of Northern Ireland, and that the election did create the most broadly based parliamentary representation ever. The election saw the

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mergence of the S.D.L.P. as a powerful political force, replacing the old Nationalist Party as the voice of Northern Catholics as sweepingly as Sinn Fein replaced the Irish Parliamentary Party in 1918. Although known as a Catholic Moderate party, it follows the principle of the father of Irish Republicanism, Wolfe Tone, the eighteenth century patriot who urged that Irishmen should unite as Irishmen and not divide as Catholics and Protestants. It is not without symbolic significance that one of the outstanding leaders of the SDLP, Mr. Austin Currie, is a Protestant.

Since the election the SDLP has been vocal in the enunciation of its aims of "peace and stability with a fair and just power-sharing administration." In practical terms, the party has called for reform of the police force to make it more acceptable to all the Northern community, and the establishment of a Council of Ireland that would incorporate the White Paper's talk of the "Irish dimension" to the Northern problem.

If the SDLP prospered at the election, it confirmed the continued break-up of the Unionist monolith. In the immediate post-election period there has been an attempt by the extreme loyalists to regroup their forces. There have been policy discussions about a united front involving the Rev. Ian Paisley's Democratic Unionist Party, Mr. Bill Craig, the Vanguard leader, (both of whom had cooperated at the Assembly elections) Mr. John Taylor and about 10 anti-White Paper Unionists. The Grand Master of the Orange Order, the Rev. Martin Smyth has also been active in trying to bring about a united loyalist front. The aim of this group is to render the Northern Assembly unworkable and to reduce the White Paper to impotency. They oppose any power-sharing with the SDLP.

Faced with this challenge from the ultra-loyalist Right, the Unionist leader and former Stormont Prime Minister, Mr. Brian Faulkner, has tried to prevent them from forming a coalition. How fundamental the growing split in Unionism is is not too clear at the time of writing, but it seems clear that loyalists of varying shades of opinion are rejecting Mr. Faulkner's leadership and his conditional acceptance of the White Paper.

As a political realist Mr. Faulkner has also had to face the possibility of having to cooperate with SDLP. He has expressed agreement to sharing power with the SDLP in the executive, provided the SDLP became committed to working within the framework of the Northern Ireland State.

Further scope for Mr. Faulkner to move to the left was unexpectedly provided from Dublin. In an important speech given in Blackrock, County Dublin, just before the Northern election, the Republic's Prime Minister, Mr. Liam Cosgrave, spoke of recognizing the right of the Northern Protestant and Catholic communities to establish their institutions. He stressed that everything would be done to reject violence. And he offered to meet Northern political groups before the establishment of the new Assembly executive.

This speech was interpreted as a readiness on the part of Mr. Cosgrave to give virtual recognition of the planned Northern administration. Interpreters pointed to Mr. Cosgrave's remark that "above all, what is needed . . . is a willingness to accept, and work forward from existing realities, rather than a concern with abstract legalistic or constitutional definitions." There was speculation that Mr. Cosgrave might be prepared to change Article 1 and 2 of the Republic's 1971 Constitution which defines the Republic's suzerainty to the whole of Ireland. This interpretation seemed to be further supported by Mr. Cosgrave's statement "We should all have learned by now how easily a conflict of abstractions, in regard to past or future, can kill the real possibilities—for peace—that exist in the present."

Not surprisingly, therefore, when shortly after the Assembly election Mr. Cosgrave met Prime Minister Edward Heath in London, he was welcomed as the most popular Irish leader ever to enter the United Kingdom. In an address to the Conservative 1900 Club in London Mr. Cosgrave said that his dearest wish was for unity, but that that was not on the agenda as its enforcement now would only re-enact the Northern Ireland tragedy in the new Ireland. He rejected the return of Stormont or Unionist domination, the re-partition of the North, any Northern Unilateral Declaration of Independence from Britain, or the withdrawal of the British Army. He gave his support to the principle of power-sharing in the North, the creation of a Council of Ireland and institutions that would evolve and secure cooperation between the two Northern communities and the two parts of Ireland.

Paradoxically, therefore, as loyalists expressed their intention to wreck the Assembly and as the Provisional IRA announced its intention to continue its campaign, the Prime Ministers of Britain and the Irish Republic were giving virtual baptism to the Assembly. Their concern is that the "wreckers" do not procure an abortion of the Assembly.

It has been calculated that at least 28 loyalists and Unionist Assembly-men oppose the White Paper with specific resistance to power-sharing and the Council of Ireland. It is recognized that a coalition of loyalists could prevent the working of the Assembly. Yet, their opposition could result in Mr. Faulkner's cooperation with the SDLP, the Alliance and the Northern Ireland Labor Party member, Mr. David Bleakley. It is the latter grouping that Mr. Whitelaw hopes can make the Assembly work. Meanwhile, since the Assembly is not expected to take power until the autumn, four months can appear as long and hazardous as Moses' 40 years in the desert.

JOHN COONEY

(John Cooney is Commonweal's *regular correspondent in Ireland.)*

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ON CELIBACY AND MARRIAGE—II

MICHAEL NOVAK

The myth of romantic love, so it is said, characterizes Western culture as it does no other. Perhaps, too, the myth of genital love is rapidly replacing it. Many mobile, affluent Americans seem to think that human fulfillment lies uniquely in sexual activity.

We live in an increasingly pagan period, sensual, oriented to pleasure, huggy, kitten-like. There is, from a Catholic point of view, great spiritual gain in this rebirth of paganism. When Catholicism is gripped by a platonic hatred of the body, as from time to time in its history it has been, it betrays its own inner spirit; it falls into heresy. The perennial Puritan complaint, indeed, is that Catholicism left to itself is worldly, sensual and "corrupt." Even in public liturgy, the Catholic people have preferred a redolent, rich, sexual imagery: thick clouds of incense, sumptuous garments, water, wax and wine. It is of the essence of Catholicism to be sensual.

In this respect, the Catholic tradition is more like the Jewish tradition than like the Protestant tradition. Jewish fiction in America reveals amazement about Christian sexual attitudes; it notes important psychological differences between Protestants and Catholics. These attitudes do not spring, exactly, from differences of doctrine; they spring from the *élan vital* of cultures rather than from their intellectual rationalization.

Thus a classic Catholic metaphor of crossed loves, the sacred and the profane in poignant competition. The "spoiled priest," "the fallen virgin," "the adulterous spouse," each is on the other hand earthy, fleshly, alive to the beauties and the torments of sexual love.

By contrast, many modern secular Jews believe such a symbol of transcendence foolish or misguided; and the Puritan temper would demand consistency and singlemindedness. It is characteristic of Catholic cultures to hold to both extremes—honoring the symbols of transcendence, exulting in worldly life—and to be forgiving of lapses at either pole.

The extraordinary forgivingness of the Catholic tradition, that deeply felt and widespread sentiment that there is no use being too shocked about scandals, sins, or crimes, owes not a little to the experience among Catholic priests and religious of their own carnal frailties.

Attacks on celibacy in the contemporary world are often carried along by an oddly puritanical spirit. People want to put an end to celibacy so that the church will be more *consistent*, more strict, more *demanding*. Instead of "wasting" moral energy on "useless" psychological conflicts over celibacy, they seem to say, priests and religious should become more "committed" and "morally vigorous" in matters of social justice, or in some other efficient moral economy.

Few stop to think whether social justice is ever attainable, even in approximate terms, in human society. If it is not, then symbols of transcendence will always retain their power. "God is with us," these symbols say, "not because of human perfectibility but because of human reality. God loves us as we are, in our striving and our falling, as well as in such poor progress as we make."

Walter Kaufmann states the human situation from the perspective of an important Jewish philosophical tradition in his new book, *Without Guilt or Justice*. "Seeing how society is riddled with dishonesty, stupidity, and brutality," Kaufmann writes of his model autonomous man, "he will feel estranged from society." "Most of one's fellow men," he writes, "are a sorry lot." Kaufmann does not expect Utopia tomorrow. He praises a model of rather lonely autonomy. He lists marriage as a strategy of evasion and inauthenticity because in marriage one may seek salvation not in oneself, but in another.

On the basis of Kaufmann's work, we could justify the celibate life as an autonomous life. Kaufmann has recently begun to explore his Jewish heritage explicitly, and has begun to appropriate explicitly the strong Jewish traditions of community and "life is with people"; he is in transit from a radical Protestant individualism to an increasingly profound Jewish naturalism. His autonomous person remains more solitary than autonomy requires.

For it is ordinarily in mutuality, in community, that autonomy is achieved. Nothing is more common than the "self-critical" pursuer after autonomy, who is self-enclosed and blind to his self-enclosure. Genuine community gives the seeker after autonomy painful realistic insight into self. Autonomy is in this sense a gift from a community to its members even more than it is a personal achievement.

For such reasons, Catholic celibacy has developed as a communal way of life, not as a solitary or individualistic way. (Even the hermits conceived of themselves as part of a community.) The dedicated love that celibacy is intended to symbolize is not private; it is communal and universal. The celibate stakes everything on the premise that at the center of all things —of sunsets, *favela* streets, emergency rooms, battlefields, bureaucracies—is a mysterious, tragic, even cruel love, not a sentimental love, not a liberal's love, but a love deeper than suffering or death. The celibate makes himself or herself into a sign of that love. It is a sign of contradiction.

(Continued on page 463)

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HISTORY, HUMANISM AND SIMONE WEIL

MARK TAYLOR

'A French, infinitely learned, female George Orwell'

For most of us the past is dead. I don't mean simply that history's facts and events are unknown to us or that we never look to it for annotations to our own problems—we do, sometimes—but rather that we lack the capacity for an emphatic re-creation of what has gone by, for an act of imagination that can perceive the past and present as parts of the same organic continuum. It is hard to remember that those were real people back then, who *felt* their triumphs and failures as we feel our own. A grim illustration: trying to comprehend fully the horrors of Mylai, many journalists invoked as illuminating antecedent the fate of Lidice in 1942. That appears a perfectly valid parallel, but Lidice is so recent that it hardly belongs to the past at all; and who thought of Melos, that tranquil village obliterated by the Athenians during the Peloponnesian War, its offense the desire for neutrality? What recedes into history can no longer move or upset us. One sure sign of the strength and profundity of Simone Weil's mind is that for her quite the opposite was true. The events of her own time she could view with astonishing disinterest and objectivity, but those of two thousand years ago, with commitment, passion, rage.

She took sides, of course. One of the few positions she ever modified or retreated from in her life, though with enormous sadness, was unconditional pacifism. "If I am prepared to kill Germans . . . ," she wrote in her notebook in 1943, "it is because they are enemies of every country in the world, including my own, and because, to my acute pain, to my extreme regret, it is impossible to prevent them from doing harm without killing a certain number of them."

She joined the Free French in London, wanting, at first, to be part of a handful of nurses that she hoped to see assigned to the front, and, later, to be sent into France as part of the Resistance. But her bad health and her distinctly Semitic appearance prevented an active role of this sort, and anyway Charles de Gaulle thought she was crazy. All the Free French could offer her was a desk job, which she took but detested, and an opportunity to investigate possibilities for the moral rejuvenation of her country when the war would end. Thus, she wrote *The Need for Roots*, probably her best book, the most comprehensive and indivisible statement of her vision of humanity, before dying in Ashford, Kent, thirty years ago this month, of cardiac failure resulting from anorexia. She was 34.

As a participant in practical affairs, Simone Weil resembled George Orwell, or perhaps it is more accurate to say that if one can conceive of a French, infinitely learned, female George Orwell, then that figure is Simone Weil. Despite all the advantages of middle-class birth, education and status, and despite frail constitutions, both spent long periods of time among society's ungifted and oppressed: Weil as agricultural laborer and assembly-line worker in a Renault factory, Orwell as dishwasher and tramp during the years he chronicles in *Down and Out in Paris and London.* Though Weil is best remembered for her Christian mysticism, she, like Orwell, enlisted for the Republican cause in the Spanish Civil War, where they were both disabled (Orwell was wounded in combat, and Weil was badly hurt in an accident). They came bitterly to recognize that the Soviet Union had sold out

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their cause. "I no longer felt any inner compulsion to participate in a war," Weil later wrote to Georges Bernanos, "which, instead of being what it had appeared when it began—a war of famished peasants against landed proprietors and their clerical supporters—had become a war between Russia on the one hand and Germany and Italy on the other"—approximately Orwell's conclusion in *Homage to Catalonia*. For their writings, too, they frequently chose the same subjects. The terrible perception that "when empty words are given capital letters . . . men will begin shedding blood for them and piling up ruin in their name," as Weil put it, informs alike her "The Power of Words" and his "Politics and the English Language."

Perspective

It remains true, nevertheless, that for all her engagement in the great actions of her time, Simone Weil maintained a transcendent perspective toward these actions. She hated everything that Adolf Hitler represented, but she could not blame him personally for what he was and did, the inevitable consequences of one part of the ancient Western, *not* German, heritage. For after all, the individual and national greatness to which Hitler and his country aspired was the unfortunate textbook ideal to which people and countries should aspire.

"Our conception of greatness is the very one that has inspired Hitler's whole life," she wrote in *The Need for Roots*. "When we denounce it without the remotest recognition of its application to ourselves the angels must either cry or laugh, if there happen to be angels who interest themselves in our propaganda." Hitler should be admired, she continued, for the courage to do what everyone else wants to do. "Once one recognizes something as being a good, one should want to seize it. Not to want to do so is cowardly." Acknowledging the lust for Hitler's blood among the Free French, and remembering with shame France's humiliation of Germany after World War I, she asserted that there was only one form of punishment that would be meaningful, indeed possible: "such a total transformation of the meaning attached to greatness that he should thereby be excluded from it." There was no surplus of this cold objectivity in 1943.

Hitler's desire for world conquest was not, then, the result of some hideous, personal aberration; neither was it the working out of some uniquely German destiny, the realization of some ineradicable disposition of the German national character. Ironically, Weil assigned responsibility for modern Germany to France, and preeminently to the seventeenth-century statesman Richelieu, who, as she wrote in her essay *The Great Beast*, "invented the State. . . . The State to which Richelieu gave himself body and soul . . . was the blind and anonymous machine for manufacturing order and power, which we know today by that name and which in certain countries is worshipped." From Richelieu the French state developed in a nearly unbroken line through Louis XIV, his successors, the heirs of the Revolution, and Napoleon, until, as a purely defensive reaction, the Germans applied its methods against it: "German romanticism, one of whose aspects is power-worship, and of which Hitler, that Wagnerian, is in part the heir, dates from the time when the whole strength of the country was strained to breaking-point against Bonaparte; in the eighteenth century there was no trace of it."

Whether by design or cruel coincidence, Nazi Germany was pursuing the goals and imitating, more or less exactly, the procedures of imperial Rome, whose ultimate responsibility for all that is brutal in the Western world Weil did not doubt. "From the point of view of the development of humanity," she wrote in a letter, "the Roman Empire is, in my opinion, the deadliest phenomenon to be found in history. It killed and even almost destroyed all trace of several civilizations, and it put an end to that whole prodigious commerce of ideas in the Mediterranean basin which made the grandeur of what we call antiquity." What Rome had done Hitler wished now to do, but, she emphasized with some optimism in *The Great Beast*, Hitler was making the single, fatal error of trying to consolidate his gains before conquering Carthage, which for him was England. Otherwise, Hitler had learned his lessons perfectly; he knew that "the Romans conquered the world because they were serious, disciplined and organized; because their outlook and methods were consistently and continuously maintained; because they were convinced of being a superior race, born to command. And also because they successfully employed the most ruthless, premeditated, calculated, systematic cruelty, combining or alternating it with cold-hearted perfidy and hypocritical propaganda."

Her Yardstick

Simone Weil surveyed all Western achievement and judged it in moral terms. For her, cultures are good or bad depending whether they encourage or repress the pursuit of freedom, dignity, beauty and virtue. That is the only yardstick, and it is an absolute one from whose measurement no society may exempt itself on grounds of a primitive sensibility: what is benevolent or cruel at one moment in human history is equally benevolent or cruel a thousand years earlier or later, and can always be seen as such; a phrase like "but that was a brutal age" has no validity as excuse or extenuation. (It will follow that Weil had little patience with the relativism of much modern psychology and literature.) She worshipped the Platonic, not the Aristotelian, spirit of Hel-

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lenism, and saw Christ as its true heir and Rome as its betrayer. In the fourth century, Rome completed its subversion of Christianity by adopting it as the official religion of the, in fact, godless Empire, a feat it accomplished by emphasizing the merely adventitious and unlucky associations of Christianity with Judaism, which, up to the Exile anyway, she believed to be founded on power, ruthlessness and the notion of racial superiority, yet another political structure most congenial not only to Rome but also to Nazi Germany.

Hitler, she wrote in *The Need for Roots*, "borrowed the model for his machine from the people who obsessed him continually by the repulsion with which they inspired him. He simply selected as his machine the notion of a chosen race, a race destined to make everything bow before it, and then to establish among its slaves the type of justice suitable to the condition of slavery." Weil, who claimed never to have been inside a synagogue, did not consider herself Jewish, but she was sufficiently Jewish, in the eyes of the Vichy government, to lose her right to teach. There can be no doubt that she was anti-Judaic, as she was anti-Roman and anti-Nazi, but she was not anti-Semitic, though she has been called so, the difference being between ideological—she would have said moral—and racial opposition. I find not a word or implied opinion in any of her writings that can justly be designated as "racist," with respect to Jews or anyone else, and, indeed, the notion of racism in her *Weltanschauung* is unthinkable.

After its suppression by Rome, the real spirit of Christianity emerged only one more time, in the culture of Cathar, around Toulouse in southern France, in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. In the surviving Romanesque architecture of Cathar and in the fragment of an epic poem called *Song of the Crusade against the Albigensians*, Weil found evidence of spiritual freedom, benign tolerance and above all happiness that would never be achieved again in the West. But the official Church, an instrument of the wealthy nobility in Paris, whose motives were more territorial than doctrinal, could not allow this civilization to go on, and destroyed it in the crusade beginning in 1208, supported by the repressive Dominicans and the Inquisition. The destruction of the city of Béziers, with the massacre of all its inhabitants, was one of those signal moments in the history of human ruthlessness, comparable to Scipio's razing of Carthage. But with these measures the Church contaminated itself. "The emergence of the Inquisition in the Middle Ages," Weil wrote in an essay titled "A War of Religions," "shows that a strain of totalitarianism had found its way into Christianity. Fortunately it did not triumph"—by which she meant that it did not utterly and in all cases crush the human spirit, though usually it did—"but it probably blighted that Christian civilization which the Middle Ages were on the point of bringing to flower."

The cultural artifacts of different societies were as subject to Weil's scrutiny as the societies themselves. She believed that the duty of schools was to expose the students to what is most moral, not to what is most prominent. "Talent has nothing to do with morality. But in all spheres nothing *but* talent is held up to the admiration of children and men," she wrote, and "An educational method which is not inspired by the conception of a certain form of human perfection is not worth very much." (It is worth noting that an inordinately high percentage of her own lycée students failed their *baccalauréat* exams, a fact that bothered her not a bit.)

She valued imaginative literature insofar as it showed "a discernible current of purity," a championship of the sanctity of the individual, and an abjuration of the state's omnipotence. She adored Aeschylus, Sophocles, and above all the author of the *Iliad*—not least for the equal pity he bestowed on Greeks and Trojans alike—and not surprisingly, though she had some qualified praise for Tacitus, Terence, Juvenal and Lucretius, she abominated most Roman literature as mainly an instrument of propaganda, one that had debased the Hellenic models from which it derived. Among French writers she liked Villon, D'Aubigné, the Racine of *Phèdre* (only), Molière, Rabelais, Rousseau, and a few more. Her arch literary villain was Pierre Corneille: read his prefaces, she said, to learn "to what vile depths of servility he had managed to reduce people's minds." Elsewhere in western literature she would allow another handful of writers, including Cervantes, Shakespeare and the English Metaphysical poets, especially George Herbert whose poem "Love" she was reading at the moment of her first mystical experience, in 1938, when "Christ Himself came down, and He took me."

Now, this moral, extrinsic, patently didactic sort of literary criticism is not very fashionable these days but there is something salutary about a view of art that fully integrates it into the culture from which it springs. What, after all, can a more disinterested approach lead to? Emphasizing the coincidence of German culture and German savagery in this century, George Steiner offers the frightening but not easily refuted proposition that the humanities may not humanize at all, that the richest of critical sensibilities will not necessarily belong to the most moral man. "It is at least conceivable," he writes

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in *Language and Silence*, "that the focusing of consciousness on a written text which is the substance of our training and pursuit diminishes the sharpness and readiness of our actual moral response." None of us can feel limitlessly, and the exercise of our feelings on literature may so enervate them that they cannot respond to life. Weil would have agreed, but she would have added that the objects of study, and such pedagogic methods as dry *explications de texte*, were not always appropriate. "It is absolutely necessary," she wrote, "to distinguish true from false greatness, and to set up the former only as an object of love."

Her Constituency

As social activist, as educational theorist, and as philosopher of history, Simone Weil championed those passive victims whose goodness history had rewarded with silence. Hers was a defeated, anonymous and vanished constituency: those peoples, simply, who had lost, as they nearly always would in this world, and whose losing meant neglect or calumny in the official chronicles of their conquerors. In his study of *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century* Charles Homer Haskins gives a few pages to Weil's beloved Cathari. Commenting on the paucity of their extant writings, he observes that "the destruction of this heretical literature was carried out so thoroughly that the teachings of its authors are scarcely known outside of the citations and refutations of its enemies."

In his essay "Looking Back on the Spanish War," George Orwell says rather the same thing: "When I think of antiquity, the detail that frightens me is that those hundreds of millions of slaves on whose backs civilization rested generation after generation have left behind them no record whatever. We do not even know their names." Such recognitions very nearly make all of what passes for history suspect. We owe the record of the world to a privileged few. With fury and with compassion, Weil tried to look beneath them to the masses on whom they stood.

The greatest crime is idolatry; the world's misery results from the worship of that which has no legitimate claim on our respect, let alone our veneration. "The real sin of idolatry," Weil wrote in *The Need for Roots*, "is always committed on behalf of something similar to the State. It was this sin that the devil wanted Christ to commit when he offered him the kingdoms of this world. Christ refused. Richelieu accepted. . . . The Romans really were an atheistic and idolatrous people, not idolatrous with regard to images made of stone or bronze, but idolatrous with regard to themselves. It is this idolatry that they have bequeathed to us in the form of patriotism."

In its guises of the state, money, or modern science, power robs men of their humanity, uproots them, and reduces them, as she wrote in *The Iliad or The Poem of Force*, to the status of things, either by depriving them of their will or by killing them outright. The state is an emblem for collective prestige, and such prestige can be acquired and kept only through its acknowledgment by others, that is, only through the supreme force of war, the destruction of those in whose name it acts. Men worship force when they pursue a goal irrespective of its consequences, when they blindly substitute the possible for the good. In the SST, an aircraft whose only justification is its feasibility, Weil would have found an object lesson in the perniciousness of science, which gives itself the lie in technology. Science is directed toward exhaustion, not virtue. W. H. Auden, who shows great affection for Simone Weil, has written in *The Dyer's Hand*, "We are quite prepared to admit that, while food and sex are good in themselves, an uncontrolled pursuit of either is not, but it is difficult for us to believe that intellectual curiosity is a desire like any other, and to realize that correct knowledge and truth are not identical." Such caution runs counter to the sanctity of progress, but for Weil progress is another name for idolatry.

That force is irrefragably wicked does not mean that it is illusory; it is, after all, the predominant motive in the history of the world. Weil opposed force, but she could not deny it, and thus she shared the dualistic biases of the Manichaeans and, indeed, the Cathari, a dualism she did not believe heretical. Her thinking on matters sacred and profane—the two should really not be separated—can be presented by several sets of polarized terms, the wrong direction versus the right one: Rome and Greece, force and humility, *Gravity and Grace* (the title of one of her books, indicating the law that pulls man from goodness and the choice that can restore him to it), *Oppression and Liberty* (another title), the sword and the cross: "Whoever takes up the sword shall perish by the sword. And whoever does not take up the sword (or lets it drop) shall perish on the cross."

By virtue of being human we are able to love; the proper object of love is not the state or money, but goodness, indivisible and absolute, beauty and God. All claim to the things of this world must be surrendered. The contemplation of goodness produces the state of waiting, "of immobile expectancy," that necessary precondition of holiness when "it is no longer" the man "who lives, but Christ in him. . . . All real desire for pure good, after a certain intensity has been reached, causes the good in question to descend. . . . When the conditions have been fulfilled, God never refuses." It is in this mystical union, following the elimination of self, that the meek shall inherit the earth. The meaning of Christ, Simone Weil said, lies not in the Resurrection but in the Cross.

During the 1950s, when much of Weil's work was appearing in English for the first time, many critics and

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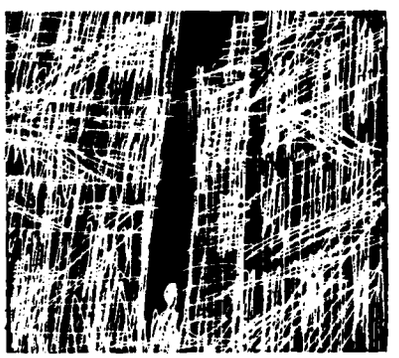
reviewers examined it with regard less to its accomplishment than to its *direction*: if she had not died at 34, they wondered, would her deepening involvement with Christian mysticism have led her into a full acceptance of, and baptism into, the Catholic Church? The frequently affirmative answer, as implied, for instance, by Robert Barrat in the 23 March 1951 issue of this journal, seems to me mistaken. Her demand, unvaryingly, was for the mountain to come to Mohammed, not the other way round. She did not place the burden of proof on herself. The problem was whether the Church would have her, on the only terms acceptable to her, not whether she would change or equivocate in order to meet it.

Weil spent four months in New York City in 1942. Just before she left to join the Free French in London, she sent her *Letter to a Priest* to Father Couturier, a French priest also living here. In this letter, by a method oddly reminiscent of the 95 theses Martin Luther posted on the church door in Wittenberg, she stated, modestly but with conviction, 35 separate propositions, whose heterodox nature she strongly suspected, and demanded to be satisfied whether, holding to these propositions, she could be admitted to the Church. "If these thoughts are really incompatible with membership of the Church," she wrote, "then there is no hope that I may ever take part in the sacraments. If such is the case, I do not see how I can avoid the conclusion that my vocation is to be a Christian outside the Church.." Among the propositions were these: "the content of Christianity existed before Christ"; Christian missionaries have done far more harm than good; "St. Thomas' affirmation, that he who refuses his assent to a single article of faith does not possess the faith in any degree, is false"; and that if two infants die, one baptized and the other not, their probable destiny is identical. Father Couturier never replied to this letter, but had he done so, it seems unlikely that he could have offered Weil much encouragement. A Christian outside the Church she would have remained.

Unfortunately, speculation over the *tendency* of Weil's thought, as well, no doubt, as the ineffable and austere purity of her mysticism, obscures the most vital—one might hope the most socially redemptive—part of her legacy. Beneath all her pessimism about the modern world lies the perception of loss of the values that can make life meaningful, and though these values may finally be spiritual, they are none the less concrete and accessible. Rootedness, she wrote in *The Need for Roots* —the sense of belonging to one's community, profession, ancestors, land, and past—is the most important need of the human soul, a need whose eclipse caused the collapse of France in 1940: the French had nothing to fight for. It is, finally, against rootedness that force has always warred: by substituting the material reward of a job for its dignity, by destroying the monuments of antiquity, by making the physical displacement of citizens easy and necessary, by making men into soldiers. Force obliterates the past, especially what is best in the past, and that, she said, is the supreme human tragedy. In a way, of course, rootlessness has always been a threat—"Men are estranged from what is most familiar," said Heraclitus, "and they must seek out what is in itself evident"—but it is severely exacerbated by modern technology. And, perhaps some sorts of rootlessness are more painful than others. In *The Warriors*, that profound study of men in combat, J. Glenn Gray reflects on the moral regression from the nineteenth to the twentieth century, illuminated by the symbolic transformation of the pioneer into the refugee.

Prewar France is a long way from contemporary America, but many of the questions that Simone Weil wanted her countrymen to ask are ones we, too, should be asking. After reading through much of her work, especially *The Need for Roots*, I find it hard not to conclude how central rootlessness is to our own frustrations and failures. Such seemingly disparate symptoms of national neurosis as worship of the automobile, graffiti on the subways, and the perversions of power, corruption in high places, stem from a common loss of the past, its places, its spirit of community, its ideals. "Where a real civic life exists," Weil observed, "each



one feels he has a personal ownership in the public monuments, gardens, ceremonial pomp and circumstance; and a display of sumptuousness, in which nearly all human beings seek fulfillment, is in this way placed within the reach of even the poorest."

Today, even the richest own less and less frequently a civic life of this sort. And everywhere one hears still more strident exhortations that the little of the past that remains be cut away, like so much cancerous tissue; the newest focus of our idolatry is the great god Relevance. That students should demand Relevance and that teachers should find the demand reasonable shows how remote our educational system has become from any tangible value, any understanding of the humane, any pursuit of the good. We desperately need, and we altogether lack a moral vision of ourselves and our Republic, and it is toward just such a vision that Simone Weil might lend inspiration.

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FROM WOODSTOCK TO WATKINS GLEN

TOM ZITO

The obituaries for rock as a musical force were decidedly premature

Four years ago this month an army of young Americans larger than our total occupation force in Indochina marched, hitch-hiked and traffic-snarled their way to the rolling 120 acres of Max Yasgur's New York dairy farm for the Woodstock Art & Music Fair. Some 400,000 strong, they were drawn by a three-day festival of music with 30 popular rock groups.

Woodstock quickly became Sociology, the full flowering of the youth culture that had budded in the warm, fertile, drug-infused atmosphere of San Francisco. The gathering was quickly romanticized into a Nirvanic city where people made love and not war, slipped freely into chemical bliss, and genteelly practiced the golden rule. "Of course, no one remembers the rain and the cold and the lack of food," says one less cosmically moved festival participant.

Woodstock, we were told, could never come again. It had been a happening in the absolute sense of the word: unplanned and spontaneous. Any attempt to draw a crowd that size would be doomed to failure. But Woodstock may have waned a little on July 28 when an even bigger (again almost exclusively white) mass of 600,000 arrived at the Watkins Glen Grand Prix race course for the single-day Summer Jam, the largest gathering of its kind ever in this country. In spite of the heat, the unflinching sun, the sheets of rain and the overflowing field toilets, the crowd sat, danced and got zonked to the music of the Grateful Dead, the Band and the Allman Brothers.

Obviously some powerful force was needed to lure over a half million people to a tiny town in the Finger Lakes resort area of rural New York State. Some would attribute the drawing strength to the music itself. Others counter with the new critically accepted postulate that rock—aesthetically at least—is at a low point.

Woodstock had come on the heels of the phenomenally widespread public acceptance of rock as epitomized in the Beatles' "Sgt. Pepper . . ." album. The record cut through the form's usual barriers to a more broadly based audience, prompting New York's largest record-dealer, Sam Goody, to complain to a *New Yorker* writer that he couldn't keep the disc in stock. Goody said everyone, including customers until then only interested in classical music, wanted a copy.

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In the wake of "Sgt. Pepper . . ." came a dizzying barrage of music that was quick to incorporate the technological and sociological aspects of the surfaced youth culture. San Francisco birthed the intricate, soaring "psychedelic" music that listeners claimed could be better understood and appreciated when tripping on mind-expanding drugs like mescaline and LSD. Volume levels accelerated. The recording studio, long a place used merely to capture the sound a group effected in concert, became an entity in itself, an element used like an instrument or a voice in the creation of music that couldn't be duplicated on stage. Tapes were slowed down, speeded up, played backwards and spliced at random. Sixteen separate tracks could be blended into stereo's two channels. Synthesizers and esoteric instruments like the sitar became common.

Yet rock's frantic pace, a compressed time tunnel in which yesterday's hit is tomorrow's golden oldie, faltered in repetition amid cliché. The Beatles disbanded. Jimi Hendrix, rock's penultimate *electric* guitarist, O.D.'d. The state of the music was bluntly reflected in the Rolling Stones' 1970 free concert at California's Altamont Speedway, where one member of the Hell's Angels troop hired for $500 worth of beer to protect the stage stabbed a 17-year-old to death. Woodstock's dream had become a bummer.

By the turn of the decade, groups began searching desperately for new musical directions to pursue. Loud, "heavy," basic music flourished briefly. Some turned to the early '50s style of rock 'n' roll that had been performed by black rhythm 'n' blues groups, the real fathers of rock. Others, like James Taylor, heralded the new age of the singer/songwriter, the gentler, folksy bards who wrote their own material and performed with minimal accompaniment. The music seemed fresh at first, but quickly became repetitive.

Watkins Glen came at a time when most observers of the scene had long been proclaiming the death of rock as a musical force generating broad-based interest. While some outfits, notably the British groups Yes, Genesis and the Electric Light Orchestra as well as the Dutch quartet Focus, were exploring a new synthesis of classical music and rock, most were relying on either musical formulas that had been previously proven successful or sensationalism in which the theatrical aspect overshadowed the music. For many the transvestite

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image of Alice Cooper and the flamboyant on-stage homosexuality of David Bowie marked the ultimate degradation of rock. Of the three groups performing at Watkins Glen, none presented any music that indicated fresh directions.

Little Brother, Little Sister

"These kids aren't here for the music," remarked Chief A. T. Elsworth, who headed the mounted sheriff's divisions at both Watkins Glen and Woodstock. "Big brother and big sister were at Woodstock," Elsworth explained. "So now little brother and little sister—and most of these people seem about 17 or 18—have come to this one. They don't care what it's really like. They're determined to make this another Woodstock."

Some in attendance were obviously having romanticized thoughts about Woodstock. When the rains came in sheets at about 6:30 p.m. Saturday, temporarily halting the music, the droning rain chant captured in the film of the earlier gathering was recreated throughout the audience.

The morning after the event, standing atop a mud-caked pile of garbage that included an emptied plastic jug of Great Bear Spring Water, an opened can of Franco American Spaghetti, a large box of Sun Maid Raisins, a partially eaten tin of Campbell's Pork 'n' Beans, a broken bottle of Del Monte Prune Juice and assorted watermelon rinds, towels and unused polyethylene trash bags, 20-year-old Chris Conard was explaining how he had spent three hours trying to get from the middle of the crowd to the phalanx of Port-O-Sans ringing the sea of bodies. "It was the people man, they were the trip," he said. "Forget the music."

"What we have here," said another observer at the site, "is a younger audience than Woodstock's who feel they have to go through this kind of gathering in order to cement their relation to rock music with a living experience, however short, rather than a phonograph record."

"Who can explain it?" remarked Jim Koplik, one of the two promoters of the event. "We spent less than $30,000 in advertising and wound up selling 150,000 tickets at $10 each. We never dreamed, though, we'd have this many people. I guess they just found the concept appealing: a day of music in the country. But I'm sure that the bands alone didn't account for all the people. People thought, 'This was the place to be; I've got to be there.' This was a successful Woodstock."

Success is a factor that undoubtedly weighed heavily on the minds of Koplik and his partner Shelly Finkel. Last year a one-day concert at the Pocono International Raceway in Pennsylvania drew 200,000. Conservative estimates indicate that promoters of the event made at least $300,000 for the day's work. Koplik and Finkel stood to make in the vicinity of a half million dollars, although they're not willing to discuss profits now that the show's over.

In its San Francisco heyday, rock was the song of the counter-cultural revolution, the antithesis of the profit motive. "We are all outlaws in the eyes of America," sang the Jefferson Airplane, "And we are very proud of ourselves." The music—like any pop cultural medium—became a mainline barometer of political and social attitudes. The Yippies had planned a rock festival for their counter convention in Chicago in 1968 (permits were denied). Mayor Richard Daley even managed to have the Rolling Stones' "Street Fighting Man" ("Summer's here and the time is right for fightin' in the streets, boys") banned from the city's radio stations during the convention.

Rock became the people's music and in post-convention, post-Woodstock days concert promoters frequently found themselves engaged in political tête-a-têtes with gate-crashers who claimed the music of the people must be free. Woodstock, they said, had been a free concert. In fact, they added, it worked only because its promoters hadn't made any capitalist dollars from it. (They lost nearly $1,000,000, but recovered much of it later from film royalties.)

Big Business

Still, the big business aspect of the music accelerated rapidly. Last year the record industry grossed almost $2 billion, nearly twice the nation's movie box office receipts. It's estimated that rock accounts for more than 60 percent of record sales. Companies like Wilkes & Braun, Inc., who design record jackets like the Rolling Stones' famous zippered-pants cover, earn millions annually. What was once the orchestration for the cultural revolution has quickly become high-level finance, with groups buying oil wells in Texas to protect their income from excessive taxation.

Almost inversely to its financial success, rock dimmed as a political force. This came on two levels. As its artistic cutting edge dulled, the message in the music became less didactic. Concurrently the youth culture shifted its interest in drugs from the psychedelic mind expanders of Woodstock to the mind-limiting depressants of the less political '70s like alcohol, barbituates and sopors, a generic term for methaqualone, a non-barbituate sleeping (soporific) medication.

"What we've seen in the medical tent has been very acute alcohol intoxication and problems with these things made by pharmaceutical houses called barbiturates and methaqualones," said one Watkins Glen medical official. "Our drug trouble has been coming from depressants. It used to be kids got too high to cope with things. Now they get down so low that mud and garbage seem like fun."

Not far from the medical area, nine people from

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Jamestown, N.Y., sat camped amid the slime, 15 half-full gallon bottles of wine occupying the center of their circle. "There was some good music but we forgot about that after we got drunk and started taking downs," said Mike Hilldale, 16. "Yeah, I passed out in the middle of the Allman Brothers," 18-year-old Dave Swanson proclaimed proudly.

Festival medical director, Dr. William Nagle of Elmira, went so far as to suggest that officially sanc-

tioned "drug concessions" at future such events might ease problems resulting from bad drugs hawked by young merchants. Nagle said one recurring medical difficulty came from people who had been sold hog tranquilizers as tablets of THC, the synthesized active ingredient of marijuana. "Since the vendors are selling bad drugs and no one's trying to correct this, the best thing to do is to make clean stuff available by the promoter through people with drug-abuse experience," Nagle said.

The use of downs has not only affected the festival scene. The music itself, particularly what's played in concerts, has also changed. "Imagine working in front of 8,000 kids who've come to hear a concert during the hockey season," observes Andy Kulberg, a rock veteran of the Blues Project and Seatrain. "They're sitting on boards laid a few inches above ice at 25 degrees (as at the many civic centers that serve rock concerts, ice hockey, basketball and other sports). Their bodies are chilled and they're loaded with sopors and reds (barbituates). So no wonder all they want to yell is 'BOOGIE!' Who's interested in flute solos at a time like that? They want basics."

This new down listener attitude helps explain the recent resurgence of heavy music, the rock style that defines joy as a Gibson "Les Paul" electric guitar pumped through a bank of 60 Marshall amplifiers.

"Solo work isn't important in heavy music," notes Murray Krugman, the 24-year-old producer of Blue Oyster Cult, Long Island's kings of heavy. "It's the incessant rhythm that matters. The music is built on the ability of a group to put chord structures together."

Krugman then explains how the music—often referred to as heavy metal music—received its image in the late '60s when groups like Deep Purple, Black Sabbath, the M.C. (Motor City) Five, Mountain and Iron Butterfly began creating it: "It really started in Detroit. People there compared it with car factories: the sheet metal being pressed into those big, heavy cars and the drone of the huge factory. The sound seemed kind of a rebellion at the drone and a simultaneous creation of a drone somewhat more listenable. So the lyrics are supposed to be pestering, ominous, forceful and fascist and the music follows suit. I mean, if you like James Taylor, heavy music isn't for you. It's not 'Will you love me in December as you do in May.' This stuff fulfills a lot of rape fantasies."

Sample one Blue Oyster Cult lyric, from their song "Cities on Flame With Rock 'n' Roll":

> 3,000 guitars, they seemed to cry
> My ears will melt and then my eyes
> Gardens of nocturne; forbidden delight
> Rains of steel and it's all right

Heavy music even has certain political connotations, Krugman notes. While Joni Mitchell sang of the '60s in her "Woodstock" ("We are stardust/We are golden/ And we've got to get ourselves back to the garden"), Peter Townshend, leader of heavy British rockers the Who, more accurately summons the '70s, the age when street gangs are again on the prowl in New York, with his "Won't Get Fooled Again" ("Meet the new boss/ Same as the old boss").

Despite Watkins Glen's element of camaraderie—greetings of "Brother!," the sharing of joints—the feeling was scarcely as political as at Woodstock. Country Joe McDonald's famous four-letter cheer as he introduced his "I-Feel-Like-I'm-Fixin'-To-Die Rag" about Vietnam was nowhere to be heard. Musicians played music and didn't offer political discourse. There were no Vietcong flags flying over campsites. Even Watergate fared low on the conversational totem pole.

Perhaps the situation was best summed up by actor John Belushi, who appears in the *National Lampoon's* satirical revue of the counter culture, "Lemmings." Half of that show is Woodshuck, the great gathering of the tribes with the universal theme of "Off Your Brother." In the course of the event Bob Dylan agrees to appear after a wad of bills is waved in his face, Joe Cocker collapses in drugged stupor, Joan Baez discards her baby, and the final act, Megadeath, offers a sonic, electronic overdose to any survivors.

Standing on the stage at Watkins Glen and peering out over the assembled hoards, Belushi shook his head in bewilderment. "You really have to wonder about how crazy these kids can get," said the 24-year-old actor. "They really look like they might all just kill themselves."

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THE SCREEN

Blume in Love is Paul Mazursky's third film, and his third to deal with the relationship between the straights and the swingers, the freaks and the folks, in southern California. The clash between traditional values and new life styles is obviously a very personal theme for Mazursky, for after *Bob and Carol and Ted and Alice* he made a movie about a movie director in the same sort of culture shock. But this second movie, *Alex in Wonderland*, turned out not quite true to Mazursky in reality. At the end of the film we can't help a certain confidence that the director-hero's new picture is going to be another biggie. But *Alex* itself wasn't: in fact, it bombed. Still unconvinced that he had exhausted the *mise en scène* of Los Angeles after only one film, Mazursky has stuck close to home again in *Blume in Love*, the story of an L.A. divorce lawyer, his social-worker wife and her hippie boy friend.

It's not the way it sounds, though. The wife, Nina (Susan Anspach), is really the straightest of the three. One day she comes home unexpectedly to find her husband, Blume (George Segal), in bed with his secretary. She's so offended she refuses to have anything more to do with him, and only takes up with the hippie, Elmo (Kris Kristofferson), after she has shut Blume out of her life. Nina manages to be a surprisingly distinct character—something which is, if we can go by Mazursky's films, pretty rare in southern California. Blume's chief client, Mrs. Cramer (Shelley Winters), seems more typical of Mazursky's idea of California womanhood. She sues for divorce one week, seeks a reconciliation the next, and sues again the week after that. She exhibits and expels her emotions so fast that she can scarcely have felt them in the process. In their way Carol and Alice were the same, striking libertine attitudes to cover the absence of instinctive feelings in their lives. But Nina no matter how unhappy she may be, still isn't that sort of emotional cripple.

There is a fundamental irony in Mazursky's films which, one suspects, Mazursky himself doesn't appreciate. In *Bob*, etc., Bob and Carol decide that they must begin saying what they really feel at all times. The irony here is that their feelings aren't real to begin with. The determination to have each one say what he feels is only a way to compensate for the fact that no one feels much of anything, as if the necessity of stating an emotion would compel the emotion to exist.

The result is, of course, far from discovering their true feelings by this method, they talk themselves into feelings that are ever more fake. The only genuine feeling they have is an unarticulated one which comes to them at the end of the film when, after they have all gotten into bed for a *ménage à quatre*, they all get out again without a word. This undissembling disassembly is a silent recognition that, whatever yet undiscovered feeling they may be capable of, they are *not* capable of being swingers.

Nina is interesting, perhaps even surprising, because she is the opposite of Mrs. Cramer and she knows from the beginning what Carol and Alice only begin to find out at the end. She knows her own mind. She is a character who is capable of being definite about something—a woman for whom self-respect matters more than togetherness. In establishing the character of Nina, Mazursky is greatly aided by Miss Anspach, who manages to be severe without losing our sympathies. She never resorts to conventional bitchiness while portraying Nina's wrath. Nina is the antithesis of Bob and Carol, who put all their emotional energy into pretending it's "adult" not to be upset by each other's infidelity. Miss Anspach makes us take seriously the un-hip notion that a woman might be offended at her husband's cheating. This isn't an easy thing to take seriously in southern California, and no one seems more surprised than Blume at the depth of Miss Anspach's performance.

Mazursky's ability to create a greater determination and consistency in Nina than in any previous character is undoubtedly also the result of his having written his script this time as well as directed it. Yet it again seems to me that Mazursky doesn't appreciate the strengths of his own characters. The one convincing action that the characters take in *Bob*, etc., is not only a silent one, but a negative one. They finally show sincere feeling by seeing there is something they should not do and something they may leave unsaid. An act of refusal at last puts them in touch with themselves after all the phony acts of acceptance have failed. The same might be said of Nina's actions throughout *Blume in Love*. This is why she is, for Mazursky anyway, an exceptional character.

But in the new film, as in *Bob*, etc., Mazursky can't leave well enough alone. Like the original foursome's balkiness at wife-swapping, Nina's repudiation of Blume isn't allowed to keep its integrity as an action. Life doesn't please Mazursky unless everything in it can be turned into an affirmation, as if he were himself the most naive and superficial of the hippies in his films. At the end of *Bob*, etc., the four protagonists lead a triumphal, Felliniesque procession whose ranks are drawn from—of all places—the staff of the Sands Hotel in Las Vegas. It's about as affecting as a Billy Graham Crusade held in Pig Alley. The ending of *Blume in Love* is equally ludicrous as Nina, in labor, is reunited with Blume, in St. Mark's Square, Venice. Mazursky always likes to end his films by slipping us an upper, which turns out to be a real downer.

COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

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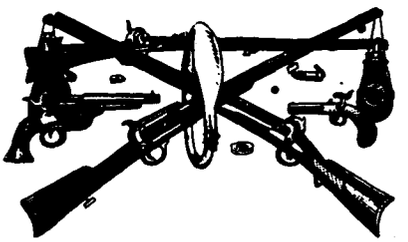
A VERBAL MUGGING



RICHARD H. MILLER

DURING THE past decade an increasing number of Americans have challenged the government-sponsored interpretation of the present and the recent past. Through recourse to articles, books and teach-ins, and aided by the televised failures of government adventurism at home and abroad, they have engendered a growing sense of public awareness that all has not been well with the corporate liberal ship-of-state—or the American historical tradition.

For these critics the American intervention in Indochina has not been another "great aberration," but the culmination of a Cold War paranoia predicated on the promise that Communism was a monolith which necessitated a global commitment to military containment. Such a governmental rationale implied a suppression of those Third World peoples struggling for a form of national self-determination at variance with Washington's interpretation of what their future should be.

These critiques have produced increasingly ferocious counter-attacks from Cold War liberals, those self-proclaimed crisis-managers who have cruised the corridors of power for the past generation promoting their version of a *Pax Americana*. In October of 1966 Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. argued that the time had come to "blow the whistle" on these revisionist critics. A year later, in *Foreign Affairs*, he proclaimed anew the liberal credo that the "orthodox American view, as originally set forth by the American government and as reaffirmed until recently by most American scholars, has been that the Cold War was the brave and essential response of free men to communist aggression."

> Then, in what strikes me as Red-baiting innuendo, he said of his critics: The fact that in some respects the revisionist thesis parallels the official Soviet argument must not, of course, prevent consideration of the case on its merits, nor raise questions

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the motives of the writers, all of whom, so far as I know, are independent minded scholars.

I might further add that all these (revisionist) books, in spite of their ostentatious display of scholarly apparatus, must be used with caution.

Since then it has been open season for, and on, both sides of the ideological battlefield. However, a milestone has been achieved with the publication of this book. The author, a professor at Pennsylvania State University, is an effective practitioner of the Murray Chotiner technique of obscuring the

The New Left and the Origins of the Cold War
ROBERT JAMES MADDOX
Princeton University Press, $7.95

about message by slandering the messengers. Wrapped in the mantle of detached scholarship he has committed a verbal mugging on behalf of the Cold War liberals.

Despite evidence to the contrary, Maddox insists that "all" of the orthodox interpreters of the Cold War "agree in attributing the origins of the struggle to Soviet initiatives." By contrast, the revisionists, who "almost always employ a double standard," are categorized as "soft" or "hard." The former "make a sharp break" between the foreign policies of Roosevelt and Truman, and "place responsibility for the Cold War on Truman and the men around him." For the latter group the Cold War "was the inevitable result of the American system as it developed over the years."

Seven supposed revisionists whose personal politics run the gamut from Wilsonian Democracy to Christian Marxism are subjected to a sustained "analysis" of their alleged methodological misdeeds: William A. Williams, Denna F. Fleming, Gar Alperovitz, Gabriel Kolko, David Horowitz, Diane Shaver Clemens and Lloyd C. Gardner—with a few gratuitous slurs hurled at Walter LeFeber and Bruce Kuklick for added measure. Maddox's *a priori* verdict, "granting a generous allowance for mere carelessness," is that their books *"without exception* (author's italics) are based on pervasive misusages of the source materials."

However, a thorough check of Maddox's charges and 318 footnotes reveals, on his part, a curious compound of ignorance, distortion and dedicated nit-picking concerning the proper interpretation of ambiguous or contradictory statements made by historical actors (e.g., Truman's Navy Day speech of October 27, 1945). His non-comprehension of Williams' analysis of the global implications of the "Open Door" philosophy in American postwar planning is exceeded only by his inability to read Gardner's and Clemens' prose in their correct context.

The attack on Alperovitz demonstrates that Maddox has a certain flair for analytical self-immolation. For example, the interested reader might refer to Maddox's charges on pp. 76-77 (especially footnote 40) concerning Alperovitz's alleged distortion of the

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Truman-Byrnes policy objectives in Eastern Europe (see *Atomic Diplomacy*, p. 234), and then compare them with Alperovitz's two (Maddox sees only one) footnote citations from James Byrnes' *Speaking Frankly* (pp. 203, 29). Nor does Maddox make any mention of Alperovitz's statement immediately following the disputed passage, which is one of many acknowledgements of the complexity of human motivations in the American decision-making process.

Perhaps the only valid observation that Maddox makes about *The Politics of War* is that "(a) comprehensive examination of Kolko's book, which runs to almost 700 pages, is impossible to present in the space of an essay." Even the cited reviewers of Kolko's book are condemned out of context. Gaddis Smith, Hans Morgenthau, Ronald Rodosh and Thomas Paterson (the latter two are "hard" revisionists, by Maddox's definition) are excoriated for their praise of Kolko, but Maddox makes no mention of their extended criticisms in these same reviews.

Maddox accuses Kolko of being "wildly inaccurate on every level" and of "writing almost pure fiction" in his treatment of the military events in Europe in 1945, but a scrutiny of the sources shows otherwise. Moreover, Kolko's alleged malfeasance in using his analysis of military events to "undergird nearly every aspect of his analysis of the Yalta Conference" is not a singular crime. Even Anthony Eden, Churchill's Foreign Secretary, has stated that "(t)here can be little doubt that the changing chessboard of war (occasioned by the German counter-offensive in the Ardennes and the Russian winter offensive of January 1945) influenced Stalin's moves. At Yalta the military situation was still conspicuously in his favor." (See *The Reckoning*, London: Cassell, 1965; pp. 522-523).

The manuscript revelations in the Truman Library and the ongoing publication of the State Department's *Foreign Relations* series continue to compromise the putative accuracy of the Truman, Byrnes and Acheson memoirs, while substantiating many of the charges of the revisionists. In addition, Cold War liberals have been very defensive in responding to George F. Kennan's memoir assertion that, by 1947, "it was perfectly clear to anyone with even a rudimentary knowledge of the Russia of that day that Soviet leaders had no intention of attempting to advance their cause by launching military attacks with their own armed forces across frontiers."

A useful starting point for a valid centrist critique of the revisionists is Robert W. Tucker's *The Radical Left and American Foreign Policy*. However, the best insights into the diversity of revisionist analyses can be obtained from their critique of each other's work. To cite a few examples: Kolko rejects Alperovitz's "atomic blackmail" thesis, while Diane Clemens challenges much of Kolko's analysis of the Yalta Conference. Gardner and Kolko claim that the Truman Administration was promoting a counter-revolution in postwar Germany, but Bruce Kuklick sees no conspiracy in American actions there. One should also consult other important revisionist contributions by Richard Barnet, Barton Bernstein, Richard Freeland, Walter LaFeber, Carl Oglesby and Howard Zinn, among others.

Finally, what is one to make of Maddox's concluding charges? The publishers of revisionist books and the editors and reviewers of anonymous "influential journals" are flayed for abdicating their responsibility in critically assessing the veracity of these manuscripts before inflicting them upon an unsuspecting reading public. In the interest of intellectual integrity Princeton University Press ought to publish the replies of "The New Left Seven" and their publishers, in order to give them their scholarly day in court.

More importantly, given the overt political implications of this book, both Maddox and his publisher should provide a full public accounting of the gestation of this book. Sources at major news gathering organizations, including *The New York Times* and *Time*, were apprised of Maddox's charges months before the book went to press, and they were "encouraged" to publish favorable stories on its behalf. In a recent column in *The Washington Post* (June 22, 1973) that vestal virgin of Cold War virtue, Joseph Alsop, has bestowed his imperious imprimatur on Maddox's efforts. In the process Alsop has even equated the supposed perfidy of the revisionist historians with that of the Watergate conspirators.

Having failed to argue or intimidate the revisionists into an acceptance of postwar government adventurism, the Maddox and Alsop assaults may be the harbinger of an old "new" strategy. One only needs to examine Truman's Executive Order of March 21, 1947, which established the Federal Employee Loyalty Program, and its implementation under Tom Clark and others, or to study Clark Clifford's memo to Truman of November 19, 1947, suggesting the appropriate means for defaming Henry A. Wallace in the 1948 election campaign, to be reminded that it was the Cold War liberals who gave us McCarthyism years before the Wisconsin demagogue made a similar discovery. And it must be remembered that it was Schlesinger's *The Vital Center* and the professional anti-communists in the American Committee for Cultural Freedom that did more than the F.B.I. or S.D.S. to stifle intellectual freedom on the nation's campuses.

Like historians of all generations the Cold War revisionists are imperfect humans with a more constricted access to the documentary evidence of past reality than those who will follow in their path. Their revisionism is subject to revision; in some instances that process is already underway. But, Maddox and Alsop notwithstanding, they have neither subverted the campus nor the truth in their efforts to reconstruct the recent past for their fellow citizens. The Indochina disaster is tragic proof that their analysis has been a more correct one than that of the Cold War liberals. One is left to wonder though if this will be a lesson learned or ignored by future wielders of power in American society.

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MORE NEW YORK 'AWARENESS'

STEVEN KROLL

Foreign Devils

IRVIN FAUST

Arbor House, $7.95

New York does strange things to a writer's head. He becomes a master of the unpredictable—of sudden change, or violence, or shock. He develops a sense of the magic that informs and controls our lives. Perverse little realities become magnified, begin to touch upon the hidden fears of our inner selves. Fantasies become flesh. Characters take on a kind of hallucinatory quality. Witness Sol Yurick or Jay Neugeboren or Hortense Calisher or Joseph McElroy. Witness Irvin Faust.

From the very beginning, Irvin Faust has been immersed in this particular kind of New York awareness. The stories in *Roar Lion Roar* (1964) had all the wry, crazy skepticism of Malamud in *The Magic Barrel,* but they had an added dimension as well, a kind of hard-edged, street-smart view of experience that took them beyond their carefully mapped, predominantly New York settings and into a relationship with America.

Roar Lion Roar defined the themes that have occupied Faust— in gradually increasing complexity—ever since. "Into the Green Night" was a tribute to the warm world of childhood movie fantasies. "The Duke Imlach Story" was about a cipher of a young man who expected life to come to him. "The Madras Rumble" illustrated our American confusion of values: how we believe in fighting for power, but only in the right place at the right time. In "The World's Fastest Human" a track star was obsessed with victory and victory over women. "Roar Lion Roar" drew the equation between winning and belonging in America. "Jake Bluffstein and Adolf Hitler" turned an elderly New York Jew into a Nazi—because the war had been exciting and peace was not.

It's but a short step from these stories to *The Steagle* (1966), and the wild odyssey of Harold Aaron Weissburg, New York English professor. Weissburg leads a conventional American life of conventional American obligations. And then it is the Cuban missile crisis and he is careening across the country, fulfilling his childhood movie fantasies, living out his fantasies of victory in the sports arena and the bedroom. Weissburg was in the army during World War II. War, he knows, is a liberating experience. Responsibility can go by the board when there may be no tomorrow. Why not get what you want when the time is right? All that power. All that glory.

Which leads us directly into the urban warfare of *The File on Stanley Patton Buchta* (1970). Here some New Left students, black militants, and a right wing police group are brought together in a confrontation that has more to do with our American idea of power and victory and the glories of war than it does with liberty and justice. And in the middle, shuttling back and forth between the adversaries, is Stan Buchta: Hofstra graduate, Vietnam veteran, New York cop, girl chaser, cipher totally without commitment.

Which provides a contrast to the commitment of Willy Kleinhans in *Willy Remembers* (1971). Willy is ninety-three now, lives in an old soldiers' home, lost one son in World War II and another out of an obsession with—yes—pole vaulting. But as he goes over his past—probing the years at his New York dairy, scrambling history, running through old movies, old popular songs, old ballplayers, and old conquests—one thing becomes apparent. The experience that shaped his life was the Spanish-American War. When he discovered his own heroism in "human-type warfare." When "it sure was something grand to see, all that thrilling and chilling American power sounding off," and they "had to plunge America into world powership." When his world was simple and intact.

Now we have *Foreign Devils,* and for the first time all the themes and obsessions have been brought together. They've also been taken further—into a vivid exploration of the agonies of the creative process.

Sidney Benson (nee Birnhaum) is a middle-aged New York writer. He is so much a New Yorker that he gets on the subway when he feels upset and has a favorite bench on 106th and Broadway. The inscription on the bench reads: "IN MEMORY OF ISIDOR AND IDA STRAUSS WHO WERE LOST AT SEA IN THE TITANIC DISASTER, APRIL 15, 1912. LOVELY AND PLEASANT WERE THEY IN THEIR LIVES AND IN THEIR DEATH THEY WERE NOT DIVIDED."

But Sidney Benson is very much divided. He's an old movie buff and a baseball buff and a veteran and he loves the big band sound. He was once a clarinetist and an actor. But he's had writer's block for four years. He's separated from his wife and two kids. His mother never liked the *shiksa* wife, and he's dependent on the family candy store for the extra money he can't make substitute teaching. His father skipped during the Depression. Morally and politically complacent, he's rooting for the Viet Cong. He'd love to win some women, but he can't seem to succeed the way he used to. He has trouble confronting himself, keeps up a running dialogue with establishment Captain Bligh and mutineer Fletcher Christian.

What to do. Nixon is on his way to

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Peking. Benson once wrote an unsuccessful story using the Boxer Rebellion and there are obvious parallels. He sets out to write a Boxer Rebellion novel that will restore his confidence and repair his life. The central character will be a foreign correspondent, a logical extension of himself.

And what happens? Norris Blake, fearless correspondent for Pulitzer's *World,* turns out to be an arrogant buffoon. He cares for nothing but power, will exploit anyone for the sake of a story, exults in the glory, the freedom and romance of war. Victory of any kind excites him. Like Harold Weissburg, Stan Buchta, and Willy Kleinhans before him, he prefers to be where the action is, and although he finds reason to question the premise that "we of the civilized world know what is best for our yellow, black and brown brethren," he seems struck by "the openness of honesty" of his own belligerent nation. His contribution to the reportorial art has been the phrase: "OH?" He's a cipher with no commitment to anyone.

And the result? Benson gets more thoroughly mixed up with Blake. There is some hope for him—and some doubt about him too. But you'll have to read the book.

And it's a book well worth reading. Not only for its continued Faustian insights into our ambiguous American natures. Not only for its ability to document that tenuous, perilous relationship between the writer—his moods, his fears, his uncertainty—and the work he produces in the midst of it all. (Four years separated *The Steagle* and *Stanley Patton Buchta.* Make of that what you will.) This is a novel that can be read for its humor and richness of language as well.

Over serious questions of identity, Irvin Faust's characters have frequently indulged in impersonations. Weissburg acted his way across the country. Buchta had to keep *acting* like a cop. Willy seemed quite busy impersonating himself. But over them all stood the author —perfecting various ethnic voices in *Roar Lion Roar,* concocting the whole series of old movie routines in *The Steagle,* stringing together the historical —and not so historical—one-liners in *Willy Remembers.* Following a New York tradition, Faust has always been something of a stand-up comedian in print. And now we have a Sidney Benson who identifies with Lenny Bruce, and the constant—occasionally wearying—banter between Benson, Christian, and Bligh, and the uproarious, well sustained, Norris Blake, foreign correspondent, routine. Imagine a silent film melodrama transferred to the page, and you'll have some idea of Norris Blake's prose style.

All of Faust's novels have been flawed. *The Steagle* gradually slid out of control. *Stanley Patton Buchta* never quite made sense out of Stanley. *Willy Remembers* couldn't entirely reconcile the blurring of history with the clarity of remembered personal experience. *Foreign Devils* can't quite make it all add up either. But you will laugh, and you will cry. It's Irvin Faust's best book to date.

Father Coughlin

SHELDON MARCUS

Little Brown $8.95

JOHN C. CORT

My remembrance of things Coughlin is of visiting Irish friends in Brooklyn on Sunday afternoons during the Thirties and seeing the grandfather hanging over the radio, the face rapt and the eyes glazed and the Voice filling the room with its rolling broguery on the roguery of Roosevelt and the international bankers and how they manipulated gold and silver like peas and shells until nobody knew what was what except only the Voice and you suspected that the Voice didn't either.

And then there was the summer of 1937 when Father was telling all America that no decent Catholic could belong to the CIO because it was a Communist organization. And down at the *Catholic Worker* we got so scared that people would believe him that I gave up a free trip to Europe just so I could stay home and write slightly inaccurate headlines for the C.W. like "CIO GETS APPROVAL BY ROME."

It seemed necessary at the time because this man, through his mastery of the rabblerouse, had become the single most influential voice in America, with the possible exception of FDR, and the single most influential voice among American Catholics with the possible exception, and I stress possible, of the Pope.

Perhaps I should have gone to Europe because a few months later Archbishop Mooney did a little more than I could by telling everybody that Father Coughlin's remarks about the CIO did not speak for the Church. At the same time he told Father Coughlin to cool it. Early in 1937 Mooney had succeeded Bishop Gallagher as Coughlin's superior, which was tough for the latter because Gallagher was totally under his spell and gave him his blessing every time he wanted to blow his nose.

Pius XI backed up Mooney and for a few months the Voice was stilled. But then Coughlin, as he had so many times before, mobilized his following and brought so much pressure to bear on Rome that even the doughty Pius XI had to relent. For another four years the Voice messed up the air waves with what became an increasingly anti-Semitic, pro-Fascist, pro-Nazi Party line.

By 1942 a Government at war with Hitler and Mussolini and a Church embarrassed by the priest's almost open sedition combined to confine Coughlin to his massive Shrine of the Little Flower in Royal Oak, Michigan, until his retirement as pastor in 1966.

I suspect that Sheldon Marcus has given us the best biography of Father Coughlin that we have seen so far. Its principal fault is that Marcus has a tendency to convict before presenting all the evidence, to drive in all the nails before slamming the lid on the coffin. There's no question that he has done an excellent job in collecting nails and driving them in. It's just that he can't restrain his eagerness to tell you how bad Coughlin was instead of just letting you draw your own conclusions from the evidence, which is more than ample.

Before the conviction, however, let's

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mention a few good things about Coughlin. One, at a time when the injustice and suffering inflicted by our economic system cried to heaven for vengeance his was one of the few voices in the Church that was raised in protest. Two, he did much to make sure that what happened in Europe, with disastrous effect for both Europe and the Church, did not happen here—namely, the identification of the Church with the rich and powerful. Three, he swung his vast following behind Roosevelt in 1932 and helped to create the atmosphere of tolerance for reform and experimentation that produced the New Deal. Granted that by 1936 he was blasting Roosevelt and had formed a third party to back a rival candidate. Fourth, he probably persuaded more people to read the social encyclicals of Leo XIII and Pius XI than any other publicist of those documents.

On the debit side, as Marcus does well in proving, he had an almost contemptuous regard for the truth. At the very time he was damning the speculators in gold and silver he permitted his secretary, Amy Collins, to take $20,000 of the contributions of the poor to the Radio League of the Little Flower and purchase 500,000 ounces of silver. He then wrote a statement saying that he had nothing to do with the finances of the League—an obvious lie, since the League's articles of incorporation gave him "complete control over all aspects of the corporation's activities."

Coughlin was beating the airwaves at this time in behalf of passage of the Dies-Thomas bill which would have raised the price of silver to $1.29 per ounce, bringing Miss Collins, alias the Radio League, alias Father Coughlin, a profit of $425,000, which is well over a million bucks in today's money.

Later, when Hitler started terrorizing the world and exterminating the Jews, Coughlin's newspaper *Social Justice* made a practice of reprinting articles from German Nazi publications almost verbatim, but without acknowledgement, to justify Hitler's policies.

The same publication reprinted the entire fake monstrosity known as the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* while the radio priest protested piously that he was not anti-Semitic.

In the last analysis, one must conclude that Father Coughlin used the combination of his priesthood and his eloquence to achieve national popularity to push one of the nearest facsimilies to a successful homegrown Fascist movement that it has been our misfortune to see in this country.

Whether over-eager or under-eager, Sheldon Marcus has done us a service in bringing this out with such force and clarity.

The Making of a Psychiatrist

DAVID S. VISCOTT, M.D.

Arbor House, $8.95

Loving and Curing the Neurotic

ANNA A. TERRUWE, M.D. & CONRAD W. BAARS, M.D.

Arlington House, $14.95

CARLO A. WEBER

The first line of David Viscott's increasingly popular autobiographical notebook, *The Making of a Psychiatrist*, misleads the reader into thinking that what follows will settle comfortably into the new genre of iconoclastic books about medicine, and especially about psychiatry. "The most beautiful sight in the world," he begins, "is the city of St. Louis growing smaller in my car's rearview mirror." Not bad for openers. But it does suggest that the rest of the work will be glib, articulate, and probably puerile in content, featuring an array of used-car salesmen ("Would I lie to you?") one-liners. All of this has become a familiar part of the "let me not put you off" syndrome of pseudo-exposés. But wait, Viscott is deceptive. Behind a breezy and offhand style, a lot of exceptionally solid material sneaks up on the unsuspecting reader.

The style, like the man, is sometimes flippant and irreverent, but just as often delicately sensitive, provocative and substantial, with more solid insights per chapter into the practice of good psychotherapy than in any other book I have read on the art in a long time. Viscott teaches while he is autobiographical; he is didactic without seeming to be. And his humor always fits. And why not? The care of souls is simply too important a matter to be taken seriously; and therapists, like theologians, ought to have the good grace to be able to laugh at themselves. Here, the book is the man; and descriptions of the man, therefore, become the best descriptions of the book. Of his own experience, Viscott writes, in two of many sections: "How do you like that? It was possible to be a human being and a psychiatrist at the same time" and "I really disliked having to be the witty and clever one in strange situations in order to avoid being hurt."

There is genuine candor about the ambiguity of the psychotherapists's role in the healing encounter, an ambiguity which has often allowed the therapist to have it both ways. If, for example, a patient's anxiety is increasing, the therapist can claim success on the grounds that the increased anxiety demonstrates

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that he is cutting through the patient's resistance to the underlying problem. If, on the other hand, the patient's anxiety is decreasing, he can still claim success because the painful symptoms are remitting. But we can do a little better than just hide behind that ambiguity. Viscott writes of the equivocal position, "Sometimes, I felt so far removed from the healing process and I could neither claim credit for success nor be blamed for failures." If these lines were just cute, we could dismiss the book as the work of a dilettante; but Viscott also observes that the experience of success without being sure of the reasons for it can be a most humbling experience. The candor continues as Viscott sensitively contrasts the hopelessness of most state hospital in-patient services with the chance at least of success in community treatment, and artfully, though without rancor and bitterness, cuts through the facades and charades of his professional colleagues.

Like any traditional book on psychiatry, this one is studded with case histories, but they are woven into the narrative, rather than added like footnotes. They are also cryptic and vital, unlike the sterile scripts one normally encounters. Viscott ranges from ludicrous episodes, that put one in mind of the film *Hospital*, to the oft-neglected and most serious reasons for practicing psychiatry in the first place, apart from the good money involved: "I felt for the first time that I could help a patient by being me, by being a person."

In all the episodes, cases, and vignettes of his residence and early days in practice, Viscott is supremely on target, if only to expose the chinks in the psychiatric armor. In this respect, I did have a sense of voyeurism, however true I know the incidents to be, as though the jacket should have carried the caution 'For Psychiatrists Only.' But the book is really about and directed to all those who engage in psychotherapy, in one role or another.

So accurate is Viscott in his assessments, both of patients and colleagues, that I also entertained the impression on occasion that Viscott tended to show himself as being generally unsure, but always right. I wondered about the cases Viscott did not include, and the confrontations with colleagues that he might occasionally have lost. Viscott has written the kind of exposé every graduate student promises to write once he is degreed and released, and he has done it with sprightly dialogue, good narrative and a captivating style to go with superb clinical insight and therapeutic artistry. All of this is presented so pleasingly as to make one think that the title of Viscott's next book might well be the *Making of a Novelist*.

Singularly lacking in the very same characteristics of good humor and humility is the rather pretentious effort at a psychotherapeutic *Summa* that Terruwe and Baars offer us in *Loving and Curing the Neurotic*. If the title alone were not enough to suggest that the book is a bit presumptuous, the authors go on to claim that theirs is a "New look at emotional illness," a "breakthrough," and that the reader will be ". . . delighted with the profound insights" that he will find. Whereas Viscott made his entrance on cat's paws, Terruwe & Baars come in with a lion's roar; but after all the roaring is over, the fury seems drained. The style is stilted and pedantic, and though apparently not a translation (at least we are not informed that it is), the work nonetheless suffers in translation.

The 'new look' is the application of Thomistic Psychology to the understanding of neurotic behavior, and a partial rejection of the Freudian hypothesis. This is accomplished by prefacing the work with a brief précis on scholastic psychology, and then appending some reflections on the prevention of neurosis based on the same scholastic schemata. A somewhat impoverished bibliography supports the impression that the authors seem rather unaware that they are traversing ground that has been walked before, all the while laying claim to discovery.

That is not to say that there is not considerable merit in what the authors have reiterated for us. The distinction between repression and frustration neurosis that forms the basis of much of their view on psychotherapy is as valuable a conceptual model for the understanding of neurosis as any other. The analysis, treatment and prevention of frustration neurosis is solid, for example, but it suffers somewhat when the authors present it as though they had discovered the phenomenon of frustration, and were the first to recognize and write about feelings of being unloved, inferior and insecure (Chapter 11, Part III). Most of the findings are common enough that they need little empirical support beyond the authors' clinical experience, and they are given none. Some however need support, and are also given none: ". . . the emotional life of the man is more deeply penetrated by reason than that of the woman." And there are some that seem downright tautological; "This is not so strange when we realize how pronounced the difference between the emotional life of a child and that of an adult." All right then, are there any questions? If not, class will resume tomorrow. When you add to this the fact that the binding is poor and the price ($15.00) outrageous, there must be better ways to spend the money.

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REVIEWERS

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CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 443)

Sklar says he is concerned to know "the true conditions under which they [the POWs] lived." Will he, and *Commonweal*, join me in demanding a McKay Commission for the POWs?

ROBERT MARTINSON

REPLY: Mr. Martinson is absolutely correct; this is just what we need, an independent commission set up to deter-

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mine just what did happen to these men. The problem, of course, is that there is no way in which to do this—that is, realistically. The men are scattered goodness knows where; some are in the service and others are out; and the actual conditions that they might attest to are 14,000 miles away, if they have not already been destroyed or converted to other uses (I am talking about the prisons themselves). Even if we could get our hands on the men I'm afraid there would be insuperable problems, particularly with the military which has, as I indicated in my January 5, 1973 article, gone to great lengths and continues to go to great lengths to obscure whatever truth may be present. No, I'm afraid what we are going to have to do is settle for the verdict of history when, from the vantage point of time and with the benefit of documents now hidden from us in military and governmental archives, not to mention the diaries, letters, and perhaps other autobiographical material from the POW's, we will be able to assemble something like a better fix on what actually happened to them. In the meantime, the only things one can have are the little hints that one gets here and there from those who were there. It is too soon for much to be learned in this way because the POW's are still too precious a tool; something which most of them seem to enjoy and which prevents the truth from coming out. Nevertheless, there is some hope. Only the other day one of the POW's accused of making anti-war speeches not only admitted he had done so but that he would do so again. It took a while for something like this to come out simply because, again as I indicated in my later piece on the POW's (June 1, 1973), the truth would be too painful for too many of us who still want to believe there was something honorable about what they did, that it was not all the incredible waste that it was, and that in spite of anything anyone might say, this is still the America of days gone-by when our cause was just, our men were brave and all of us were the happier if not the wiser for thinking so.

BERNARD SKLAR

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Michael Novak (Cont.)

No one denies that celibacy today has fallen upon hard times. But these times, not celibacy itself, are out of joint. In the villages of Europe, celibacy was always a difficult symbol to be faithful to; people learned about "human weakness." But the symbol attempted was great enough to justify the risk. Some were skillful. Even those who were not faithful could not injure God's transcendence; their "fall" calls it forth in its most centrally divine form. Only God is capable of that compassion of which Jeremiah wrote, that *misericordia*, which is more than simple forgiveness: making new again.

Celibacy, in the Catholic scheme, does not mean that sex is sinful but rather that it is attractive, good, and powerful. It does not mean that each human is alone, but rather that each lives in a universal love that lives in each. ("I in you; you in me.")

Again, Catholic celibacy is not a form of anti-institutional romanticism, but the reverse. Even the symbols of transcendence are to be found, in the Catholic scheme, in community and in institutional settings. Thus all the ambiguities and failings of institutional life afflict celibacy and add to its burdens.

Not all who are called to this charism are good natural refractors of its meaning. Some are puritanically inclined; some are idiosyncratic and—to be blunt—a little kooky; some are misogynists or misanthropes; some are homosexuals; some are lechers or alcoholics. They are a human lot, and that is part of the symbolism, too; as in *The Power and the Glory*.

Because celibacy is institutionalized, it is also subject to institutional rearrangement and reform. Celibacy is a sign, a symbol, and so it is also subject to cultural interpretation. In some cultural settings, what it tries to signal can scarcely be understood, and in the normal course of things is inevitably misconstrued. In some environments, celibacy may be so unprotected and vulnerable a symbol that to insist upon it would be to tempt the Holy Spirit and to dishonor human capacity. In all such matters, the discipline of celibacy is subject to practical wisdom. These are *practical* questions.

Added to Christian ministry, celibacy is a highly charged and potent symbol, whose disappearance would deeply alter the symbolic vocabulary of the Catholic people. But Christian ministry is a powerful symbol in its own right. Catholic liberals have been superficial and glib regarding the symbolic dimensions of Catholic life. If there are to be changes in such deep and basic dimensions, their depth and reverberations must be clearly estimated in advance.

(*More to come.*)

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